



Fall/Winter 2009-2010

Research and Action on Girls, Women and Tobacco Use

The mission of the British Columbia Centre of Excellence for Women's Health (BCCEWH) is to improve the health of women by advancing knowledge to improve care and policy.

The BCCEWH is entering its 13th year of activity. We have completed over 270 projects in women's health and published hundreds of resources, articles, reports, and books. To ensure effective research and useful knowledge exchange, we engage with communities, health care and social service providers, policy makers, and academics across Canada and around the world.

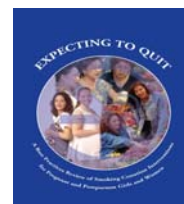
One of our significant activities is conducting research and improving policy to prevent and reduce tobacco use among girls and women. The BCCEWH pays particular attention to research and policy that will improve the health status of women who are marginalized and who face disadvantages in health due to socioeconomic status, race, culture, age, sexual orientation, geography, disability, and/or addiction. The BCCEWH conducts research on the determinants of health as well as on health services and systems, incorporating the perspective of sex, gender and diversity.

The Tobacco Research Program is one of several research areas within the BCCEWH. We also conduct research and engage with policy makers and practitioners regarding mental health and addictions issues for women, chronic disease, health promotion, and health services. We approach substance use and addictions holistically, integrating concerns and experiences of mental health, trauma, and violence against women into our research and program development.

Research and Knowledge Exchange Program Highlights

Supporting Tobacco Cessation During Pregnancy

In 2004, *Expecting to Quit: A Best Practices Review of Smoking Cessation Interventions for Pregnant and Postpartum Girls and Women*, was completed by a team of researchers at the BCCEWH and published by Health Canada (available for download at



www.bccewh.bc.ca under "Publications"). We are currently updating that systematic review of smoking cessation interventions for pregnant and postpartum girls and women, particularly for women who are young, disadvantaged, or living on a low-income. We will be developing new educational resources for pregnant girls and women and health care providers based on the findings of the new review and previous work.

Conducting Systematic Reviews

The BCCEWH has conducted systematic reviews for the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE), an internationally respected government organisation responsible for providing national guidance on promoting good health and preventing and treating ill health in the United Kingdom. These include reviews on workplace tobacco policies, tobacco prevention in youth, UK smoking cessation services, and partner support for smoking cessation during pregnancy (available for download at www.nice.org.uk/guidance).

The BCCEWH has reviewed evidence for Health Canada on tobacco prevention and cessation programs for adolescents ("Best Practices in Tobacco Control: Examining Smoking Prevention

and Cessation”). In addition the BCCEWH has reviewed evidence on the effects of tobacco policies on vulnerable groups and tobacco cessation interventions with pregnant and postpartum women (both available for download at www.bccewh.bc.ca under “Publications”). Based on these reviews, we support decision makers to tailor tobacco control efforts according to sex, gender, and diversity.

Developing Tailored Tobacco Interventions

The BCCEWH is involved in several clinical research projects to develop and test appropriate smoking cessation interventions for diverse groups of women. Current projects include addressing the role of sex and gender in tobacco dependence treatment for women and men in drug treatment settings “*Smoking Cessation and Drug Treatment*” and “*Differences in reasons for smoking among women and men in drug treatment*”. Through collaboration with the Vancouver Coast Health’s Tobacco Dependence Clinic Program, we are conducting a pilot feasibility drug trial “*An examination of the efficacy, safety, and sex and gender differences in using varenicline as an aid to smoking cessation in a population of methadone maintained opioid-dependent patients*”. We are also interested in tobacco interventions delivered by health care providers in various contexts such as “*Assessing smoking cessation interventions by providers among pregnant girls and women*”. Our aim is to integrate and tailor smoking cessation and tobacco dependence treatment programs with support on other issues occurring in women’s and men’s lives recognizing gender and diversity issues.

Qualitative Research on Aboriginal Girls and Smoking

In partnership with six Aboriginal communities in BC we recently conducted a qualitative study on smoking by Aboriginal adolescent girls (13-19 yr.). Findings shed light on how age, gender, culture and context intersect to shape Aboriginal girls’ experiences of smoking. The final report, and a short highlights version, entitled *Hearing the Perspectives of Adolescent Girls on Smoking* are available from the BCCEWH website and from (www.coalescing-vc.org).



Sex, Gender and Diversity Analysis of Tobacco Use Measurements

The BCCEWH is currently conducting a comprehensive sex-and gender-based analysis of the Canadian Tobacco Use Monitoring Survey (CTUMS) in order to assess the appropriateness of the survey in assessing the differential experiences of Canadian women and men with tobacco use. Based on findings from a comprehensive literature review examining the use of CTUMS, and focus groups with women and men who smoke, we will develop recommendations on how the CTUMS survey could be modified to produce more sex- and gender- sensitive data on tobacco use in Canada.

Understanding the Effects of Tobacco Control Policies

Reducing Harm: A Better Practices Review of the Impact of Tobacco Control Policy on Vulnerable Populations examines the effects of tobacco control policies such as price and taxation, sales restrictions, and location restrictions on vulnerable populations in Canada such as young women and men, Aboriginal peoples, and women and girls living on low incomes. *No Gift: Tobacco Policy and Aboriginal People in Canada* examines tobacco use and tobacco control among Aboriginal peoples in Canada with a gender lens. Both publications are available for download at www.bccewh.bc.ca under “Publications”.

Understanding the Links between Tobacco, Trauma, and Women’s Substance Use Issues

We are conducting research on the complex relationships among tobacco use, violence and trauma, and substance use issues for girls and women. Our aim is to apply this understanding in shaping practice, programs and policy to improve responses to women affected by substance use and addiction. For example, we have included tobacco as one of the substances under investigation in studies that examine the links between substance use and housing insecurity. We are also examining women-centered models of integrating tobacco interventions into alcohol and drug treatment, and exploring how systems can provide care that is trauma-informed.

Preventing a Global Epidemic of Women's Tobacco Use

The BCCEWH is working to change girls' and women's relationship to tobacco use and tobacco production within Canada and internationally. This work has been supported by partnerships and funding from Health Canada, the Canadian Institutes for Health Research, the International Network of Women Against Tobacco (INWAT), the World Health Organization (WHO), the American Cancer Society, and Cancer Research UK. We are examining the links between the status of women, gender equity, and tobacco use. We are concerned with women's roles in both the consumption and production of tobacco, the effects of tobacco use on women's health and the impact of tobacco control efforts on girls and women across the world. We invite researchers and advocates from around the world to work with us. Our goals are to help shorten the progress of the female global tobacco epidemic and reduce rates of smoking among vulnerable people - especially girls and women.

Turning a New Leaf

These issues are discussed in *Turning a New Leaf: Women, Tobacco, and the Future*, released at the 13th World Conference on Tobacco or Health in 2006. This publication provides an overview of worldwide trends in women's tobacco use, including the social context in which they occur; current information on tobacco's adverse effects on women's health throughout the life cycle; a snapshot of women's roles in the cultivation, manufacturing, and marketing of tobacco, as well as commentary on how international human rights treaties can advance progress in tobacco control. The report concludes with resource chapters on how to apply gender-based and diversity analyses to tobacco policy and program development within countries at different stages of the tobacco epidemic. The report is available in English, French, and Spanish at www.bccewh.bc.ca under "Publications".



Tobacco Control in Argentina

In partnership with INWAT, the BCCEWH is leading a project examining how to integrate gender into tobacco control policy development in Argentina. The aims of this project are to develop a Canada-Argentina partnership, to explore the impact of globalization on tobacco control efforts, and to integrate gender-based analysis into tobacco control policy development in Argentina. A workshop on this research was offered Buenos Aires in the fall of 2009. The results of this work will be disseminated by all the partners, including INWAT, women's organizations in Argentina, the BCCEWH, the InterAmerican Heart Foundation, and researchers at the Italian Hospital in Buenos Aires.

Working with the World Health Organization

We have completed a brief, *Gender and tobacco control*, and a background paper, *Sifting the Evidence: Gender and global tobacco control*, for the World Health Organization (WHO). Both of these documents explore the impact of gender on tobacco use and its relation to the enactment of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC), are available for download at www.who.int/tobacco/publications/gender/en/index.html



Participating in Training and Education

The BCCEWH runs the [Intersections of Mental Health Perspectives in Addictions Research Training \(IMPART\)](#), an innovative, multidisciplinary research training program designed to equip health researchers from across disciplines, sectors, and settings to conduct gender- and sex-based research in addictions, including tobacco, with a focus on the intersections of violence, trauma and mental illness with addictions. IMPART is funded through the Strategic Training Program grants program of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research. The introduction of tobacco into this program is important because often tobacco research is separated from other research and practice in addictions. For more information, please go to www.addictionsresearchtraining.ca.

Partnering on Knowledge Exchange

The BCCEWH devotes considerable resources and time to policy development, the development of better practices, program design, and developing clinical improvements in responding to girls, women, gender, and tobacco. We publish accessible reports, journal articles, better practice guides and policy briefs to reach the widest audiences possible. We place a high priority on knowledge exchange and work in partnership with: the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse

(www.ccsa.ca), the Centre for Addictions and Mental Health (www.camh.net), the Canadian Women's Health Network (www.cwhn.ca), Research for International Tobacco Control (www.idrc.ca/tobacco/), the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) - UK (www.nice.org.uk/), the International Network of Women Against Tobacco (www.inwat.org), the Global Network for Perinatal and Reproductive Health (www.ohsu.edu/gnprh/), and many other organizations, governments, provider networks and community groups.

Selected BCCEWH publications on women and tobacco

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- Greaves, L., Vallone, D., & Velicer, W. (editors) (2006). Tobacco policies and low socioeconomic status girls and women. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health* 60(Supplement 2).
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- Bell, Kirsten; McCullough, Lucy; Devries, Karen; Greaves, Lorraine; Jategaonkar, Natasha (2006) *Workplace policies for smoking cessation: a Rapid Review*. National Institute of Health and Clinical Excellence, United Kingdom. <http://www.nice.org.uk/nicemedia/pdf/FINALUpdatedWorkplacePoliciesReviewSCS.pdf>

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